Nga Tamatoa from Maori Television

“...Meaning stand up and do something...we knew something was wrong so we were going to do something about it....I think for most Pakeha they were quite shocked by it. We were meant to be obedient... activism helped shape the rest of my life and perhaps helped to shape Aotearoa as we know it.”

**narrator:** 1971 revolution was in the air [in New Zealand]. Civil rights, women's rights and anti-Vietnam War. Three out of four Maori now lived in the cities but were still the bottom of the heap for housing, health and employment. The urban youth's response was Nga Tamatoa.

**Rawiri Paratene: I was just 16. A school boy here at Hilary College when I joined Nga Tamatoa. Those years of political activism helped shape the rest of life and perhaps helped to shape the rest of Aotearoa as we know it.**

**Hone Harawira: Mana Party Leader “Nga Tamatoa was prepared to put themselvs out on the front line when on the other side was the whole of Pakehadom and a goodly percentage of Maoridom as well”.**

**Narrator:** Nga Tamatoa forced the issue of land rights and recognition for the Treaty of Waitangi. It drove Maori language into the classroom. Nga Tamatoa was a generation of young people prepared to stand up and fight the system.

**Rawiri Paratene:** There was the full gammut [whole lot] of feelings amongst the group from the totally non-aggressive approach to lets take up arms and have a violent uprising and die for the cause. And I was one of those who was prepared to die for that cause. Growing up in Otara helped politicise me and several others that were growing up there. I was a Prefect and top student, but looking around I could see our people were struggling. There was no library or gymnasium. There was a feeling that we'd been dumped there. And not much thought had been given to an area which was going to have a whole lot of teenage kids bored with nothing to do. And that made me angry that there were the haves and the don't haves. It was pretty clear that the don't haves were mainly Maori and Pacific Islanders.

Narrator: Nga Tamatoa emerged out of a week long Young Maori Leaders Hui and Auckland Univesity. The Hui was called by Maori Studies Department lecturer, Ranginui Walker.

**Ranginui Walker:** Emeritus Professor Auckland University: They were talking Brown Power, Black Power, Maori revolutionary front. Bathing the streets in blood. In otherwords the rhetoric [speaking talking] paralleling [the same as] the Black Power Movement in America. And after hearing all this rhetoric they were deciding on a name. What to call themselves. I suggested Nga Tamatoa “The Young Warriors”.

**Rawiri Paratene**: “ I clearly remember the formation of Nga Tamatoa. I was there.

**Taura Eruera:** “hui hui hui hui nothing happens. Why bring us to all these hui and nothing happens? There was no one to lead and so by default if it wasn't going to be anyone else then it must be us.

Narrator: Syd and Hanna Jackson quickly emerged as the dynamic leaders.

2

**Rawiri Paratene:** Hanna because she was a star and had great passion, a fantastic orator and could stir an audience and Syd because of his political astuteness. [astute means Having or showing an ability to accurately assess situations or people and turn this to one's advantage]

Narrator: At Hilary College a like-minded student was Hilda Halkyard who later married Hone Harawera

The Walker brothers, sons of Ranginui Walker, also joined Nga Tamatoa at 16 and 17.

**Stuart Walker:** “We'd had a very very middle class city-based Auckland European-type upbringing in the city. And recognising that there was more to our lives than that, I think,

**Michael Walker:** The welcome was warm and friendly. Hanna came in and said that our father had said there was a couple of little pakehas coming along to your meeting tonight.

**Stuart Walker: .**..the troops were all out on the march. I sort of hid behind ...I certainly was not going to get into anything too serious.

Narrator: When the Walker brothers met Tama Iti they knew that they had achieved their goal of connecting to their taha Maori [Maori side]

**STuart Walker:** he appeared on the scene like something out of the Tuhoe Mountains like he really is. I think many of us were thinking that this was the man that we would aspire to be. Even though we were weedy little city kids and here he was in his boots and dungarees and speaking Maori from the moment he could first open his mouth where as the rest of us were still struggling with tena koe.

**Rawiri Paratene:** was strongly urban with bases in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. After Hilary College I headed to drama school and Wellington's Nga Tamatoa with among others Tiata Witehera.

**Tiata Witehera:** I was only a 16 year old. Not long arrived in Wellington. Up the street came this march against the Vietnam War and in that march there was a contingent of Maori. They were saying “Haere mai Haere mai. I was a young Maori and these were Maori saying Haere mai so I went and joined them.

Rawiri Paretene: I remember Wellington Nga Tamatoa for standing up for young Maori in the court system.

**Verne Winitaha:** In 1972 I was a probation officer so I had a little bit of an understanding about the systems of the court. So we decided that we would supply or provide support to people.

...Some of the Maori boys in Nga Tamatoa study law full time have said that they will come back and work in this office full time, just for their Maori people.

...we were able to develop the beginnings of the duty solicitor scheme.

**Tiata Witehera:** prior to that work in the courts I had an experience where I went to a down town night club and I got involved in a scuffle. It was over one of the women there being harassed. The judge said to me, how do you plea: guilty or not guilty? I said guilty. The reason I pleaded guilty was because I was whakama. I'd never been in front of the courts before [ashamed, shy, bashful, embarrassed.] So in going into the courts to do that work I could see the same thing happening. “How do you plead? Guilty or not guilty? “Guilty” Why? Because people just wanted to get in [to

3

the courts] and get out.

**Paratene;** It hardly sounds revolutionary but we [Nga Tamatoa] faced constant accusations of militancy and violence.

**TVNews Reporter:** There's a group of radical Maori activists looking to overthrow of the New Zealand government.

**Syd Jackson 1972:** If providing legal rights for Maori children in courts is causing violence then we are guilty of it. But at no have we taken part in any action which could be construed as violent.

**Reporter:** there must be some reason for these charges. Why do you think they've come up?

**Jackson:** I think the reason is because Nga Tamatoa is new and that it's come into the public place. And the saying of things in English and without the politeness that Maoris traditionally have had [shown] but have stated the grievances that Maoris have had for years spoken about in Maori on the Marae.

**Verne Winitaha:** There was some guy in Auckland who spoke with the Waikato Times [newspaper] claiming that we had all these revolutionaries. Only because we had Karate classes, and because a lot of my students were Black Power and Mongrel Mob members they were saying that we were training up the revolutionaries to take over the country.

**Paratene/Narrator:** That rings a bell today.

**Verne Winitana:** Well it does doesn't it.

Narrator/Paratene: While in Nga Tamatoa, Verne played rugby for the North Island team and was a junior and Maori All Black.

**Verne Winitaha:** and then I was promptly told that I wouldn't be needed for any more rugby for New Zealand. And so I think my Nga Tamatoa past had caught up with me.

**Paratene:** You got any regrets?

**Verne Winitaha:** no no regrets. The ideals that we held in those days were far more reaching, far more long term than kicking a pig skin bladder around the paddock.

**Narrator/Paratene:** Over the past 40 years Nga Tamatoa have lost several of its warriors. Hanna past away in 1999 and Syd in 2007. They were both huge influences on all of us.

Moana Jackson, Syd's brother: most of what I learned in terms of politics I learned from him, but this enduring memory is one of this kind, loving and generous big brother really.

“A tribute to the Living Maori Race”, by Rawiri Paratene. ...and we will rise as one. No longer razzle dazzled. We are not homeless, nor are we lacking spirit.

SKIP TO WAITANGI

Narrator/Paratene: Waitangi is really where Nga Tamatoa really made its presence felt. John Miller captured most of that historic action.

John Miller: Now this is a very celebrated incident. Paul Kotare set fire to the White Ensign with a

4

copy of the Peoples Voice [Communist Party Newspaper]. The top there is of James K Baxter's head. The navy rushed over and rescues the flag and put it back up the flag pole.

**Paratene:** I think part of the reason for Paul doing that was frustration at an earlier attempt to cut down the flag pole. I was a kid so I was always in the background all the time. But I heard it being plotted and I was watching it all. But they only took an axe and its steel.

...Another time the Pacific Islands civil rights group the Polynesian Panthers joined Nga Tamatoa to attack the flag pole.

**Will 'Ilolahia:** We were all set to go and had axes and everything all ready to do the business, but we turned around and the Maori protesters weren't there so it was a bit hard for us islanders and an indian to actually do the work so we kind of cancelled that particular thing. We thought “oh yeah. Typical Maori time.”

Paratene: we focussed on Waitangi Day to highlight the treaty that did not deliver what Maori signed up for.

1971 Reporter: “At Waitangi Day this year many Maori will wear the Maori sign of mourning as well as being dressed in black.

**Hanna** well up until today the Waitangi Day has been treated as a day of celebration. The Nga Tamatoa Council along with other Maori groups feel it is no day to celebrate. In fact we feel it's a day to mourn.”

**Reverend Kingi Ihaka:** That ceremony of the mourning of the Tangi is a very sacred ceremony to Maori people. I wouldn't be a bit surprised that if they do it quite publicly during the ceremonial part [of the Treaty of Waitangi Celebrations on Waitangi Day] that some of the elders will attack them.

**Ranginui Walker:** This was a new phenomenon, an alienated urban youth and they were impatient for change. And in fact they were conpletely alienated from their elders. They took the view “you guys have had your turn – move aside.”

BACK TO JOHN MILLER TALKING ABOUT WAITANGI 1971

**John Miller:** then of course in the evening you have Muldoon and Hanna has gone out into the ground. There's a big scrum where everyone is getting pushed back and Jim Baxter is getting stomped on and everyone is getting kicked in the shins by the hob nail boots of the sailors. And that was as rough as it got.

Paratene: In retrospect 1971 was tame. In 1972 we raised the

4

stakes.

**John Miller:** This is the a young urban Maori gang from Otara called The Storm Troopers.

A description...

Storm Trooper at Waitangi aiding Nga Tamatoa in 1972. Has “PEACE” on his helmet!

**Paratene:** Waitangi '72 also shows how Tamatoa was becoming a who's who of movers and shakers in years to come.

A description...

“There's a well known image...

Paretene: Again Hanna Jackson made a stand. …

John Miller: Of course the following day the police had two busloads brought in to keep law and order.

6

...this is when the commemoration started. Everyone moved up to the rope barrier waiting for the charge and then on a signal everyone turned left and walked out leaving the cops guarding a rope. Then Tama who stayed behind. They actually grabbed him and threw him through the air out the gate.

A description...

Waitangi 1972 at the rope barrier before the protesters turned left and walked away.

**Paratene:** later Waitangi became the domain of the Haraweras. Often without the support of their own people. They led protests well into the 1980's.

Hone Harawera talks about protest happenings during the 1980's

But for about a decade, for most New Zealanders, the Harawera's were public enemy number one.

Hone Harawera mentioned regretting some of the things he said in an argument /discussion with his uncles.

...Hone Harawera continues to fight for Maori

...So was it all worth it?

The protests resulted in some progress

**THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL 1975**

**Ranginui Walker:** the government realised that the protesters were right. They were heavy handed and ignoring the Treaty.

**Paratene:** but now I think Waitangi Day has lost its way as a platform for protest. Coming back here now, it kind of doesn't know what it is right now. What brought us here in 1971 was we saw it as an opportunity for us Maori to air our grievances and the grievances haven't been addresses and so we still require that platform and so part of me says “bugger off all you other fellas. Take your massage tables glass bowls and your cheap t-shirts. Keep those out of here. That's not what its all about....Other people might want that. But it's not for me. I'm heading home to see the mokos. My

7

son's whanau have banned English at home. Yet when I was with Nga Tamatoa, the language was the brink of extinction.

….

When Hana Jackson and Lee Smith addressed Parliament's Maori Affairs Committee in 1972 most of Nga Tamatoa couldn't speak our own language.

Lee Smith 1972 to the Parliament's Maori Affairs Committee: We claim that Maori educational under achievement and the birth of the Maori school drop outs can be traced directly back to the decision to educate Maoris only in English”

Hana Jackson: It is high time civilised multi-cultural attitudes took over from the ignorance born of white racism.

Paratene: so on September 14 1972 Nga Tamatoa and Victoria University's Te Reo Maori society took the Maori Language Petition to Parliament.

Ranginui Walker: The initiated the petition and collected the 30,000 signatures asking for Maori language to be recognised in our primary and secondary schools.

A description...

Paratene: When I was going to school I could study French, German or Latin but I could not do Maori at any stage in school it was not being offered.

A description...

8

Paratene watches himself give the mihi at Parliament at the delivery of the petition.

...A funny thing happened to me that I can't really explain. ..The Reo just came out of me

“This misunderstanding of Maori people is something that the Pakeha has neglected and something that needs to be looked at. I think that the key to it is the language.”

...Just as we made concessions for my grandmother's pigeon English, today my mokopuna make allowances and reluctantly speak English to me.

...For me it was pretty simple. It was the focus of my parents to give us a Pakeha education and to learn Te Reo Pakeha because they saw that as the way for us to progress in the modern world and so it was a conscious decision for them....just as it is a conscious decision for you to give your kids Te Reo Maori.

**Willie Jackson:** One of the myths about the language was that all these native speakers were infact the biggest advocates, whereas in fact the biggest advocates for the change were Maori who couldn't speak Maori.

**Paratene:** finally Te Reo Maori made it into schools, but there were only a handful to teach it.

1982 – then a decade after the petition the first Kohanga Reo opened.

**Ranginui Walker:** Initially they were established by Kuria and Koro who spoke Maori to their mokopuna and that movement caught on like wildfire to the point where we had 800 Kohanga Reo throughout New Zealand.

**Paratene:** But now Kohanga Reo has taken a case to the Waitangi Tribunal over policy changes which threatens the movement's existence.

**Ranginui Walker:** They demanded that anyone who teaches in an early childhood system has to have a qualification and of course a lot of the people in the Kohanga Reo didn't have a qualification. Now the result of that is that Kohanga Reo have declined from 800 down to 400. So what was a hopeful saviour of the Maori language has been constrained by the State limiting its production.

1987 – THE NEXT STEP WAS TO HEAR TE REO MAORI ON THE AIRWAVES

**paratene:** the first Maori radio station started in 1987, but there are still few Maori broadcasters offering a Maori perspective that have gone mainstream.

**Willie Jackson:** We advocate a Maori position, but Tama Iti goes to jail and 80% of the talkback callers think it's great. There's still not enough Maori in prime positions to substantially change New Zealand opinions.

MAORI TELEVISION LAUNCHED 2004

Ranginui Walker: One of the arguments for television was that when you are looking at this mass media which enters every household in the country, it paints a picture that the only world is a Pakeha world. Only white people. Brown people – they don't rate. And that's the message little children get from TV. And that's what Maori television does for them. It is now good to be Maori.

Paratene: Do you think that Hana's petition played a role in the birth of Maori television?

Larry Parr: I think it was a milestone along the journey. I took copies of the petition home and put them on the bar. Dad managed a chartered club....people were happily signing the petition and then the local cop came in and said “what the hell's this... that bunch of radicals ..they're dangerous and dad took the petition off and wouldn't put in back on the bar. I was pretty disappointed that he had chosen to take the side of the local cop.

9

Paratene: But despite the gains since then there is more work to be done.

Larry Parr: you get deluded into thinking you are making good progress. Just imagine the impact if every Iwi said “Ok from this point onwards we will only communicate with the Crown in Te Reo Maori.

Now there are organisations to help Te Reo

Janine Tamati-Eliffe organiser of Kainga Korerorero: It is really about us supporting other whanau like ours that are trying to raise their Tamariki in the Reo and giving them resource and one on one support.

The demand for quality total immersion schooling far outweighs what is provided in many centres throughout New zealand.

Paratene: It's 40 years since we delivered the petition to Parliament. There have been some gains but a United Nations study found that Te Reo Maori is still at severe risk of becoming extinct. Only 1 in 4 of us can speak Maori and that's not good enough. I struggle to understand why it's still not compulsory in schools. Words like “compulsory” scare people but that's what needs to happen and what will come back to the country will be so enriching and what my dream still is, is of living in a land where all of us have got at least two languages. And those two languages are English and Maori.

A description...

Paratene: You know Parliament was the scene of another big Nga Tamatoa protest. Tama Iti and I camped out in a tent here in 1972. The Maori Embassy demanded Maori control of Maori things.

10

THE LAND MARCH

A description...

Whina Cooper on the Land March

A description...

**Paratene:** The Land March aimed to halt the loss of Maori land. By confiscation, legislation and sale, Maori had largely become tenants in their own country with just 5% of land remaining in Maori hands.

11

**Dame Whina Cooper 1975:** I know it embarresses the government to think that for the first time in history the Maori ever marched to Parliament.

**Paratene:** Dame Whina Cooper led the Land March but I'm proud to say Nga Tamatoa and the Polynesian Panthers were among the main “behind-the-scenes” organisers.

Miriama Ruahihi-Ness, Polynesian Panthers: my role there was to set up the 26 maraes.

Paretene: The march grew from 50 people at Te Hapua to 5000 when it reached Wellington.

A description...

##### Syd Jackson: The important this is that the natives are daring at last to stand up and protest.

Ranginui Walker: People had in common that they had lost their land by various devious legislative means. So they were prepared to march.

Hana: Marching is the most dignified manner in which to draw attention to the general public just what problems the Maori people have been facing towards retention of our land. Many of us have been rated off the land. We are unable to get loans to build on our properties.

Paratene: Tiata Witihera travelled up to join the march

Tiata Witehira: WE came all the way back to Wellington. It took us a month. “I've given up work. Many of the people on the march have thrown in their jobs ...to participate.

**Vern Winitana:** ...dealing with some of the infractions that occurred on the Land March...anymore nonsense particularly on Marae ettiquette they will be asked to leave straight away.” they realised that we were a group that weren't prepared to broach any sort of nonsense.

Ranginui Walker: Now the rural people are quite apolitical [not political] but they were prepared to host them. And so at night, after a meal, they would go into the House and they'd say “now tell us why are you marching?” {Guest friendship. Xenia in ancient Greece}

12



and so on route they were politicising people as they went and more and more people joined the march.

… I watched them come across the bridge [Auckland Harbour Bridge] and it really was an impressive sight. You could see the bridge swaying as they marched. People were quite scared. They felt that it was the mana of their ancestors being displayed.

**Tiata Witehera:**...I remember when we got to Porirua and Whina Cooper got up and said: “We've been sucking the Pakeha lolly too long. If we don't get a satisfactory answer when we get to Parliament we will stay there. When we get to Parliament the politicians do their welcome and then they have Tama Ake ? And then thanks very much for coming and we were expected to depart. Well we looked at ourselves and we thought “crikey. What did we gain from that. And so you could say that Nga Tamatoa decided to stay on. I think they left us there for about six weeks until they



##### 13

Decided to move in and move us off.

Paratene: It wasn't the first time Nga Tamatoa had occupied Parliament's front lawn.

...Tuhoe Nation, home of Tama Iti. In 1972 he set up a Tent Embassy at Parliament [yes this is mentioned before]. I was in Wellington at drama school but acting soon gave way to activism and I spent months with Tami camped outside Parliament.

Tama Iti: ...they had a tent Embassy over in Australia so [I thought] that's what we're gonna do.

We were gonna do the same thing because we felt we were treated like foreigners in our own country.

##### ….when asked by a constable what he was doing sleeping in the tent on the front lawn of Parliament he said: a hello I'm the Maori Ambassador....they arrested me and charged me for tresspassing. And next minute I was locked up.

**Paratene**: Charged and released, Tami went straight back to Parliament. Our focus was the 1972 elections. Our catch cry “Maori Control of Maori Things”.

**Duncan MacIntyre Minister of Maori Affairs** : ...there's no law set down that says Maori can't get to the top. The only reason why you haven't got a Maori as Minister of Maori Affairs is because we haven't got a Maori in the National Party.

**Paratene:** Patu [club or pounder] power came as a response to the international Black Power. We even tried to develop an equivalent to the raised fist of Black Power that never took off because it was silly. We used the three fingers of classical carving so we tried to do that but it looked like a W and so we gave up on it.

...We were young and despite the serious Kaupapa [principles] we let our hair down now and then.

**Tama Iti:** ...drinking parties and women.

**Paratene:** 40 years on, Tami is still making headlines. I wanted to ask him about the notorious 2007 terrorism raids and the talk of paramilitary activity.

**Paratene:** Are you a terrorist.

**TAma Iti**: No. Never have and never will. But we have been terrorised. Tuhoe has been terrorised in the 1860's. Taranaki, Waikato. I think the whole country has been terrorised....I think that fear...it is typical of the people in power to create that along as there is division amongst ourselves. We were just loud noise really. We were really just no sweat.

**Paratene**: From my korero with Tami I find the activist becoming a community leader and Kaumatua.

**Tama Iti**: we can only do so much. We are not super heroes. ...Don't remain to be the victim. And so we just need to move on and paint a new picture.

**Paratene:** Tuhoe want the Uruwera National Park back but they also want ...Maori control of Maori things for Tuhoe. Exactly what we were asking for at the Tent Embassy.

**Tamati Kruger:** So Mana Matuhaki is not a protest movement. It is not an application for benefit and special treatment. Rather it is about us taking responsibility and obligations for our futures.

**Paratene:** However when other ears hear that around the country what they hear is that those Tuhoe people want to form their own nation inside our nation and they view it as separatist.

**TAmati Kruger**: Mana Matuhaki is not separatism. We can't be. We can't afford our own airport and our own hospital. We quite like the ones that we've been using for the last few years! And I think that the majority of Tuhoe people want to bring to a conclusion a violent and non-production

14

relationship with the crown. For something diffferent.

**Paratene:** I enjoyed my first trip to Tuhoe country and it's interesting that while Nga Tamatoa demanded Maori Control of Maori Things there's been a shift and today we've been talking more about iwi control of iwi things.

...WE've known it's going to take time and we are prepared to hang in there

A description...

An insulting haka similar to this one sparked the final battle for Nga Tamatoa.

The haka they took offence to was an Auckland University annual student prank. Some members of Nga Tamatoa decided that it had to stop.

**Ranginui Walker:** When I was a young student at ST Peters Maori College in the 1940's I was in Queen Street and I saw this parade going up. It was a student capping parade and it was good fun. And there were these young pakeha guys dressed up in grass skirts and jumping up abnd cavorting and doing the haka. I thought nothing of it.If they liked to make themselves look student that's fine. But the performance had become more sexist over the years. More lurid [vividly shocking] painting slogans that were sexually offensive: even painting penises on their bodies.

Janet Roth President of Auckland University Students' Association in 1979 wrote of the many unsuccessful attempts to get the engineers to stop: When it was begun 25 years ago Maori students protested. Protests continued since. This year [1979] the Maori Club asked them to abandon it. But they refused.

**Hone Harawera:** There's a lovely photo of Hilda all by herself remonstrating with all these pakehas who were in all these tin helmets and dark glasses and filthy slogans and pacific island grass skirts and boots and they had been drinking

A description...

and they are doing this really “shit house” version of the haka . She was all by herself trying to stop them.

**Ranginui Walker**: the real cultural collison between the dynamic of Maori revivalism and pakeha conservatism where your engineers are going to be your future leaders and managers of the system.

**Hone Harawera:** it was the night before and Hilda was actually crying and she told me that the Maori Club didn't want to do anything about it. They were scared they might lose the marae [at the university] if they made a fuss. I just jumped in my car; rounded up a few people from Ponsonby; went out to Otara and said be at my place at Ponsonby tomorrow morning at 7 oclock. The plan was that Hilda had written out the script. She would go in and read it all out to them. We'd all stand around so they would know how serious we were. Then they would hand us over all the grass skirts and then we'd leave. Unfortunately when we got there, Hilda wasn't the first one into the room. 14 of us actually got into the room [engineering society]. 10 men 4 women and there was 51 of them. And we were cleaning them ? In all about 3 to 4 minutes. We got all the skirts off them.

**Ranginui Walker:** then all hell broke loose in the press; this gang invasion of hallowed [holy] precincts [places] of the university.

**Paratene:** The headline is “Gang Rampage at Varsity leaves students battered.” One student required stitches after being clubbed over the head with an iron bar. Another was badly cut after being hit in the mouth with a crash helmet. A third was badly bruised on his body when he was bashed with a length of chain.

**Ranginui Walker:** they were probably [dealing with] a wounded pride more than anything else because there was “the niggers were getting out of line.”

**Hone Harawera:** I was bloody glad I was there. I was proud of every body. Maori and Pacific Islanders too all mixed up men and women.

**Hilda Harawera:** It was just common practice in those days to get a hiding from the cops and I can remember one of the statements written by one of the girls that was arrested. She was hapu at the time. She was beaten up in the cells. She lost her baby, aye. It was quite sad and it takes you back to the time when you just took it.

16

**Paratene:** this is one of several statements about police brutality to the protesters. He then pulled my hair; slapped my face; threw me around the room; punched and kicked me. I tried to defend myself but a policeman grabbed me around the neck from behind and forced me to my knees.

...There are many New Zealanders who will not believe that that behaviour has ever happened. [they believe] that our police are lilly white. I can look you honestly in the eye and after my experiences as a young kid growing up in the suburbs “our police are not lilly white.” We were often picked up by police and taken into Otahuhu and beat up.

...Nine protesters appeared in court charged with participating in a riot and injuring with intent. They received support from Kaumatua and the Maori establishment.

**Ranginui Walker:** and the late Dick Stirling explained the significance of the haka... if a person came inappropriately dressed to do the haka he would be beaten....it was interesting to see the dynamics in action in the court as these big macho male pakeha came in, used to running the show, you know: top dog and as they walked in they saw a sea of brown faces sitting in the court. Then they realised how offensive they had been.

**Paratene:** The capping day haka was never performed again, but by now Nga Tamatoa was already fading into history.

**Ranginui Walker:** It's a feature of activism: you take a lot of heat; you take a lot of pressure and you get ...tired you get worn out, but then that doesn't mean to say that the dynamic is lost. Others arise and take over.

**Hilda Harawera:** And for me personally, protesting can/is a way that is not a life style. And I think that we moved from Otara because people expected us to be the ones to protest anything for the sake of protesting. You've got to come to a point where you've got to build an alternative.

Tia**ta Witihera:** And so it was to come home and put some of our own korero and action into our own whanau and marae and our hapu.

**Paratene:** so one by one we chose new ways to achieve the goals we fought for in Nga Tamatoa.

...so what happens to old Nga Tamatoa members? Where have they all gone?

**Taura Eruera:** I used to have a little joke. Tamatoa's never die they just become consultants.

**Willie Jackson:** I think they should be honoured for some of the things they did. We honour a lot of our Maori with knighthoods and all that but I don't think anyone from Nga Tamatoa's been honoured. I think the latest one is in jail at the moment: Tama Iti.

**Paratene:** since I caught up with Tami he's been sent to prison on firearms charges related to the police raids on Te Uruwera in 2007. the fact that he was jailed brought me to my first protest in years.

...Tami already has great mana as a Kaumatua and as a Kaumatua of the protest movement and this has given him even more mana.

“Get your hands on a computer and write the book”

Some of us older warriors are ready to sit back now. But can we really afford to.

**Willie Jackson:** there is actually an active opposition to many of the gains we have made and there just seems to be this backward step that anything Maori needs to be reigned in. Perhaps we're getting too uppity? Perhaps we're getting too good?

**Hone Harawera:** Now for all of those positive changes we are still the poorest people in the land. First fired; last hired. That's still our history.

**Paratene:** so we pass the baton to the next generation of Nga Tamatoa. My eldest daughter Marama

17

has taken on the activist reigns.

**Marama Davidson:** I just think it's really important for Wahine Maori to have a voice. That's where I'm coming from.

**Paratene:** I'm actually quite proud to see that there is new blood that is actually not accountable to us. They have their own strengths

**Hilda Harawera:** ...and have the cheek to believe in more. Isn't that wonderful?

**Moana Jackson:** I don' actually see much action from young people... they have to be a bit more innovative, creative and a bit more political.

**Hilda Harawera:** My mum used to say that when you close your eyes and turn your back on this world, will you be happy with what you've done in your life and I think I already am.

**Ranginui Walker:** the dynamic of Maori culture is unstoppable. That's my optimism. We've come back from the dead.

**Paratene:** I'm very proud of what we all achieved with Nga Tamatoa and I'm very proud that we've all kept the flame burning in our own particular way. But there's still a lot to do today. So my whero for the next generations remains : tama tu tama ora tama noho tama mate tamatoa.

##### Nga Tamatoa

Nga Tamatoa was the 1970s protest group that forced Maori grievances over land and language loss into the spotlight. In NGA TAMATOA, actor Rawiri Paratene, the youngest founding member of the group, revisits his past to provide a personal insight into the movement and its impact on life in Aotearoa.  
  
In 1970, Paratene was a 16-year-old schoolboy at Otara’s Hillary College when he attended the inaugural Maori Leaders Conference in Auckland, an event bursting with the era’s most influential Maori thinkers. Out of that hui was born the activist movement Nga Tamatoa, and Rawiri Paratene became its youngest founding member.  
  
Nga Tamatoa’s members were largely urban, university-educated Maori angry at continuing land confiscation and the degradation of te reo Maori. Recalls Paratene, “There was the full gamut of feelings amongst the group from the totally non-aggressive approach to the ‘let’s take up arms, let’s have a violent uprising and die for the cause’. And I was one of those who was prepared to die for the cause.”  
  
The movement ushered in a new era of Maori assertiveness. In the documentary, Paratene ventures back into the first Nga Tamatoa protest at Waitangi in 1971. On September 14, 1972, Paratene was in the front row when Nga Tamatoa and other activist groups delivered their 30,000-strong Maori Language Petition “praying for courses in Maori language and aspects of Maori culture to be offered in schools”.  
  
He reflects on the 1975 Land March, and ventures to Te Urewera to catch up with his old friend, Tame Iti, with whom he spent months camped outside Parliament in the ‘Tent Embassy’ lobbying, as the banners read, for “Maori control of Maori things”.  
  
Paratene, many of whose acting roles have portrayed people trying to bridge cultural divides, takes viewers on a rich historical journey as he reflects on the social conditions that led to Nga Tamatoa, its impact and whether its kaupapa remains relevant today. “Those years of political activism helped shape the rest of my life and perhaps helped shape Aotearoa as we know it.”

#### Date Added:

Saturday 15 Sep 2012 – premier screening